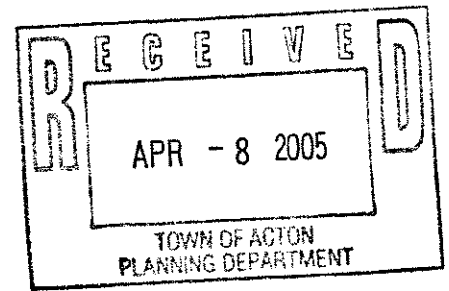


April 8, 2005

To: Acton Planning Board
Roland Bartl, Town Planner
Kristen Alexander, Assistant Town Planner

CC: Jon Witten, Esq., Daley and Witten, LLC

Subject: Ellsworth Village Special Permit Application



The residents of Brabrook and Flagg Roads believe that the Ellsworth Village senior housing project is, in general, good for Acton. We particularly support the addition of affordable housing units to the town's limited inventory.

We strongly feel, however, that this development should not be accessed through an established neighborhood of families with small children. Ours is a vital and active neighborhood. Our children play and ride in the street and frequently cross the street to visit one another. This project would triple the number of vehicles on Brabrook Road, permanently jeopardizing the safety of our children.

The intersection of Brabrook and Pope Roads, already extremely dangerous, would be made drastically worse. It should be noted that this intersection serves as a school bus stop and there have been numerous 'close calls' where children were very nearly injured as a result of the poor sight lines. The safety concerns at this intersection cannot be simply addressed by regrading the shoulder and removing a few trees.

We, the residents of Brabrook and Flagg Roads, strongly urge the Planning Board to require that Ellsworth Village be accessed directly from Great Road.

The alternative access via 133 Great Road would be much more appropriate. Access across this parcel not only resolves the safety concerns of the Brabrook and Flagg residents, it also eliminates an extremely invasive crossing of valuable wetlands.

The concept plan submitted by the petitioner for 133 Great Road clearly demonstrates that access directly from Great Road is completely viable. Robert Moran submitted a letter to the Planning Board regarding his attempt to negotiate access to Ellsworth Village via the parcel at 125 Great Road. This letter clearly shows that Mr. Moran is actively involved in this project and has a vested financial interest. As the owner of 133 Great Road, Mr. Moran should be compelled to provide access across this parcel. The families of Brabrook and Flagg Roads should not be made to sacrifice their safety for the convenience of Mr. Moran's commercial interests.

If the Board is determined to allow access to this development via Brabrook Road despite the neighbors' serious concerns, we ask that the Board require the following conditions to the Special Permit.

1. **Town Water Provided to Flagg Road Residents:** The petitioner indicated that he would provide water "stubs" to the residents of Flagg Road to mitigate the impact of the Ellsworth Village development on their wells. This should be specifically required.
2. **Subsidized Water Hookups:** The developer should subsidize the cost of connection to town water for residents of Brabrook and Flagg Roads, since the need to connect to town water is a direct result of the Ellsworth Village development.

3. **Fire Hydrants:** The developer should be required to install fire hydrants along Brabrook Road. One logical location for a hydrant would be the corner of Brabrook and Flagg Roads.
4. **Repaving of Brabrook Road:** Any excavation of Brabrook or Flagg Roads, such as for running utilities, should be repaired by complete repaving of the entire street, rather than "patching". Repaving should include Cape Cod berm or granite curbing.
5. **Speed Bumps:** To provide traffic calming for the additional traffic on Brabrook Road, speed bumps should be required. At a minimum, bumps should be located between Ellsworth Village Road and Flagg Road, and between Pope Road and the first residential driveway on Brabrook Road (#3 Brabrook). The speed bump on Windsor Avenue in West Acton might serve as a model for such speed bumps.
6. **Brabrook Road Sidewalk:** Sidewalk along Brabrook Road should be paved and have a grass buffer between sidewalk and street. A painted crosswalk should connect the Brabrook Road sidewalk to the Great Road sidewalk.
7. **Traffic light at Pope Road and Great Road:** The petitioner has often mentioned that signalization of this intersection would help to mitigate the additional traffic that Ellsworth Village would generate. There is no plan at present to install a traffic light at this intersection. The traffic consultant hired by the East Acton Village Planning Committee investigated this issue and concluded that signalization of this intersection is very unlikely in the foreseeable future. If the developer of Ellsworth Village is relying upon such a signal to improve safety for the additional traffic generated by this project, he should be compelled to provide the necessary funding.
8. **Speed Limit on Pope Road:** The speed limit on Pope Road should be reduced to 30 MPH (or less) on the section of Pope Road from north of Wingate Lane to the intersection at Great Road. The centerline of Pope Road should not be repainted following the planned repaving, as this encourages higher driving speeds.
9. **Burying of Brabrook Road Utility Lines:** If Brabrook Road is to be excavated to run utilities to Ellsworth Village, elevated utility lines for all of Brabrook Road should be buried as well.
10. **Integral Gathering Space:** A common green space should be incorporated in Ellsworth Village, perhaps with a big tree, benches, and tables where the residents could meet and socialize. This might cut down on "I've got to get out of this house" kind of trips.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns and suggestions.

Sincerely,



Tom Lemire
5 Brabrook Road
On behalf of the residents of Brabrook and Flagg Roads